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the cable, with lightning-like rapidity, conveys the dollars sent to the Committee in New York direct to the Committee in Shanghai. Thousands of the helpless ones are by this means given work to do and food to sustain them, and, with the experience gained in famines of the past, the loss of money in administration and all unnecessary expenses are eliminated. Certainly nothing can more appeal to the human heart than the knowledge of starvation, and as the extent of this great famine is becoming better known, so the response becomes more general.

The New York China Famine Relief Committee, composed of representative men, is co-operating with the Red Cross and all money received is promptly cabled to the Committee in Shanghai, without deduction. Thus far, through this channel and others, over \$175,000 has been sent, a sum which is accomplishing great good but one totally inadequate to meet the terrible need.

The Relief Committee appeals to all, even those who can afford to give but little, reminding them that every little will help swell the fund. One dollar will save the life of a man, woman or child for a month; three dollars will preserve a whole family for a similar period, and there are 600,000 families starving, with no possibility of relief until the summer harvest. Time is an important factor in this crisis; in a few weeks help will be of no avail. The sooner work and food are provided, the easier it will be to restore normal conditions and to stay the epidemic of disease which accompanies starvation.

Remittances may be sent to Mr. Jacob H. Schiff, Treasurer, 1 Madison Avenue, New York.

NUBIA AND THE BERBERINE

Under this title Mr. H. W. Beckett delivered a lecture before the Cairo Scientific Society, last year, which was printed in *The Cairo Scientific Journal* (Vol. 5, No. 59, 1911). He gives much information about that region known to-day as Nubia, a long tract which from the First Cataract at Aswan to Dongola borders the Nile with a fringe of fertile growth. This strip of cultivation varies in breadth from a few meters just south of Aswan, where the granite precludes any but the most meager attempts at tillage, up to two or more kilometers at places further south. In these places the Berberine indus-

triously till the soil that stretches as a level plain westward to the hills which look out over the arid desert.

The word "Nubia" as a name for the country south of the First Cataract is not known to the present inhabitants and is preserved only by modern geographers. It is possible that the name was derived from the word "Nuba," by which appellation the ancestors of the present inhabitants were known.

From very early times the people of Nubia had close relations with ancient Egypt. As early as the first dynasty, or about 4400 B. C., the power of Egypt was predominant up to the First Cataract, and slowly its domination was extended until, in the sixth dynasty, Pepi I had such control over the tribes of northern Nubia that they were compelled to supply troops for his armies. Mr. Beckett devotes much space to a review of the history of Nubia and its relations with Egypt.

The people call themselves Barabra, and there is still much speculation as to their origin. Some authorities, like Lepsius, maintain that they are a negro race but mingled with an Hamitic strain. Sergi, on the other hand, holds that they cannot be a mixed race and asserts that they preserve the true primitive Nubian type, and are of Hamitic origin. They call their language Nuba, and besides the parent language there are four dialects of it spoken between the First and Fourth Cataracts.

They are of medium size and well proportioned, shorter than the Egyptians, and have black, wavy hair, never woolly. Most of the men, some time or other, visit Egypt and enter domestic service there or go even further afield. They are great travelers, quickly acquire a foreign language and often take on a veneer of civilization. It is a curious fact that the women are as conservative in their habits as the men are the reverse. The women are rarely met outside their native country and cling with tenacity to their old customs. Most of the men know Arabic, but few of the women understand more than a few Arabic words. In their limited Arabic vocabulary the word "backsheesh" holds an honored place, though Mr. Beckett says he was seldom pestered for backsheesh except at places where tourist steamers touch.

Agriculture is the principal occupation of the people, and the way of life of the people is simple, like that of the Egyptian fellahin. Every foot of available soil near a village is cultivated and one pities the people when he considers that though they will be able to carry on their cultivation in future, yet during a large part of the year the reservoir above the Aswan Dam will be full up to the level of 113

meters above the sea, so that all their land will be completely submerged. Egypt's gain will be Nubia's loss. Many of the villages will have to be removed to higher ground at a greater distance from the present stream. The Government has promised to pay the people for every building or palm tree submerged, and Mr. Beckett found individuals busily engaged in erecting houses in the direct path of the future inundation with the fond idea of recouping themselves at government expense, with good interest on the outlay.

Burckhardt, who traveled in Nubia early in the 19th century, made the remarkable statement that the size and figure of the people were usually proportionate to the extent of the cultivable soil. "Where the plain is large and the people can cultivate to an appreciable extent, and are in comparatively favorable circumstances, they are tall, muscular and healthy; but where, on the contrary, the plain does not amount to more than twenty or thirty meters in extent they have small figures" (!).

As most of the younger men are in service in Egypt and only return to their villages at intervals, it is generally the older men and the women and children who live in the villages and tend the crops. A large amount of money is sent back to Nubia as the result of the money-earning abilities of the men who go to Egypt for work. It is said that as much as \$200,000 a year finds its way up the Nile from Egypt to the villages lying between Aswan and Dakka, so that domestic service in Egypt has its compensations for the people who remain at home.

Their manufactures are few, and consist chiefly in the production of handmade pottery, mats and baskets made from the leaves of the date palm, and coarse woolen and cotton cloth woven on a rough loom, which the women use to make their garments, though most of the men buy their clothing in Egypt. Their villages consist of mud-built houses, erected generally on the desert side of the cultivated land, their distance from the river varying with the breadth of the cultivated area. Often the houses, clustered close together, are perched on the rocks or high ground overlooking the fields and the river. Some houses have outside staircases leading up to the roof. The mosques are the most pretentious buildings.

The interior of the houses is beautifully clean and neat and is thus in marked contrast to the dwellings of the Egyptian fellahin and the poorer classes in Egyptian towns, which are almost invariably filthy. The floor covered with clean sand, the household pots and pans hanging from the ceiling shining and polished, and the absence of refuse and of the unpleasant smells which proclaim the proximity of an

Egyptian village all testify to the love of cleanliness of these people, who in their own homes, whatever they may be in Cairo, are a scrupulously clean race.

"As with all Mohammedan peoples, so with the Barabra, hospitality is a very common virtue and even becomes at times somewhat embarrassing. Tea appears to be greatly prized as a luxury among them and is pressed upon the guest, very often served, sad to relate, in cups ornamented with the name of some hotel, accompanied by spoons the crests or initials on which point to their having been brought away from Egypt as souvenirs of service."

It would be hard to picture a more healthful race, for disease is rare among them, except ophthalmia, which is fairly prevalent, though not so widely as in Egypt, and rheumatoid arthritis, which is almost universal. This disease is probably due to the constant immersion of the limbs in water, such as one would naturally expect from people engaged all their lives in agricultural pursuits necessitating the constant use of water for irrigation. The women seemed to be incessantly carrying their water pots to and from the river.

The scenery of Nubia has a charm peculiarly its own. Narrow though the strip is, it makes a belt of green between the desert and the river . . . There are here and there spots of real beauty. Occasionally the scenery is rugged and steep rocks rise almost clear from the water's edge; but ordinarily the banks are low and covered with castor-oil plant, lubia, and sunt trees, while the dom and date palms are scattered here and there, and in the background are clusters of mud houses that mark the sites of villages. At Dakka, where the houses are close to the water's edge, the view of the town from the river is extremely picturesque. This is one of the prettiest spots along this part of the Nile.

ISOSTASY AND MOUNTAIN RANGES*

BY

HARRY FIELDING REID

The cause of the elevation of mountains has always been a most fascinating subject of study, and we find the earlier geologists giving much attention to it. In the first half of the nineteenth century the prevailing idea was that mountain ranges were due to the upward pressure of liquid lava and that their elevation was closely related to the volcanic forces. As late as the middle

* The BULLETIN is permitted, through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, to reprint this paper from its *Proceedings*. The paper was read before the Society on April 21, 1911, and appeared in the *Proceedings* in Vol. 50, 1911, pp. 444-452.